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STRICTURES

UPON THE

DISCIPLINE

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

BRITISH MUSEUM

STRICTURES

UPON THE

DISCIPLINE

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

ADDRESSED TO THE

SENATE.

Παιδειαν δ' την περι λογον ἀχρηστον ἠσκησεν, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἧς ἐυσεβεῖν ἐμαθε, και τας ἀλλας ἐπιτηδευειν ἀρετας.

DIONYSIUS HALICAR. DE NUMA.

SECOND EDITION.

Cambridge:
PRINTED FOR W. H. LUNN;
AND SOLD BY J. DEIGHTON, No. 325, HOLBORN, LONDON.

1794.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

SENATE

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

GENTLEMEN,

SHOULD your curioſity be awakened to know who he is, that thus preſumes to call off your attention for a moment, from the more important purſuit of your ſtudies, or the more pleaſing one of your amuſements, be aſſured that he is one who honours you, reveres you, looks up with the reſt of the nation to you as the protectors of unthinking youth; the foſter-fathers of virtue and genius, the Chirons of our future heroes, ſtateſmen, and philoſophers. Conſcious of the dignity of your character, it is from thence he aſſumes courage to call upon you to act up

up to it: well aware of your conſequence to the nation, it is from thence he feels the neceſſity of urging you to a faithful execution of your duty. Thus thoſe ſentiments of reſpect, which you might poſſibly at firſt have thought violated by ſo unwarranted an addreſs, are themſelves the inſtigators, and the juſtifiers of the undertaking.

Nor am I ignorant of the difficulties of the enterprize I have begun upon. To adminſter the wholeſome, but bitter medicine of advice; to point out the alarming ſymptoms of an increaſing diſeaſe, and to bare to public view the ſecret ſeats of corruption, is as dangerous as it is neceſſary; neceſſary becauſe the diſtemper ſpreads by neglect, and the ſore mortifies beyond the power of art to heal;

Ulcus enim viveſcit et inveteraſcit alendo:

dangerous, becauſe it irritates the patient, while the relief it affords is not not ſo much felt by himſelf, as by the community.

With my eyes, then, thus open to the perils

perils of the attempt, and my heart thus warmed by a proper ſenſe of the dignity of thoſe to whom I addreſs myſelf, I will endeavour, in the few following pages, to point out to your obſervation where the diſcipline of this Univerſity, ſo well calculated, in general, to promote the cauſe of virtue and learning, is either in its original conſtitution faulty and inadequate, or has degenerated from its primitive purity, and from the fountain of wiſdom and piety, has become the nurſery of folly and diſſipation. I am not, however, ſo vain as to imagine that the unaſſiſted repreſentations of an unknown individual, and conſequently of one whoſe authority can add no weight to his arguments, ſhould be able to effect an amendment of theſe defects, or induce thoſe in whoſe hands the ſupreme power is lodged, to aſpire to the glory of having begun at leaſt, if not completed a reformation ſo deſirable; all that my feeble efforts aim at, is, that the truth of what is here alledged may arreſt the attention and

convince the judgment of ſome one, whoſe abilities and authority may gain the cauſe, I urged him to eſpouſe. My praiſe is only that of the ſilly bird, whoſe cacklings may haply awake ſome daring Manlius to repel the dangerous foe; and this humble praiſe, ſhould my endeavours be crowned with ſucceſs, will ſatisfy me.

All perſonal ſatire I entirely diſclaim: I know too well the juſtice of what Machiavel aſſerts, that "*Le calunnie irritano, e non caſtigano,*" to dare to incur the juſt and laſting reſentment of many individuals, for the ſake of gratifying the moſt deſpicable paſſion in human nature; and I would wiſh to inform thoſe, whom innate malice, diſappointed ambition, or reſentment for deſerved puniſhment, may urge to diſtort each innocent obſervation into a perſonal reflection on thoſe whom they have offended, and therefore hate; that the malignant cowardice, which they aſcribe to me, is the child of their own narrow underſtanding, or depraved heart,

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and that to ſuſpect ſuch a deſign in others, can only prove what themſelves would have done in the ſame ſituation.

An accurate obſerver of mankind has remarked, that the ſureſt bond of obedience, is the conſciouſneſs that our ſuperiors in ſtation, are alſo our ſuperiors in wiſdom and virtue; and, indeed, to ſubmit ourſelves to the direction of thoſe, whoſe judgment we cannot truſt before our own, muſt be the effect of habit, not the impulſe of reaſon.—Such ſubmiſſion muſt of courſe be conſtrained, precarious, and tranſient; inſtead of increaſing it muſt diminiſh our reſpect for thoſe whoſe foibles are thus forcibly expoſed to public view; it muſt tend to bring diſgrace upon the office thus unworthily filled, and muſt ſap the foundations of ſociety, by breaking the great and neceſſary charm that rivets the obedience of the inferior orders, and gives to the phantom of authority, the ſemblance of ſuperior merit. This important doctrine, ſo often verified in the larger political ſphere, is, perhaps, in a

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ſtill higher degree applicable to the government of an Univerſity. The lower orders here, are not thoſe whoſe minds are fettered by narrow prejudices which no liberal education has broken, and who are dazzled by the pomp of courts, and debarred from that nearer view into the private lives of their governors, which would expoſe to eternal ſhame, thoſe whoſe virtues are unequal to their ſtations. The diſtance between the governors and the governed, is not here the immutable effect of a difference of birth, wealth, and education: the gulph betwixt them is ſo narrow, that the inhabitants on one ſide are ſubject [to the view and continual examination of thoſe on the other; and ſo far from impaſſable, that the ſeat of power is ſolely ſupplied by regular ſucceſſion from the ſubordinate ranks. In birth and fortune, the rulers are often inferior, in education they are always equal to thoſe over whom they preſide, and the ſole difference that exiſts is in their age, a difference which, whatever advantage it may throw into the hands of the former,

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in this reſpect makes againſt them, that it ſubjects them to the ſcrutiny of thoſe, whoſe youth increaſes the natural jealouſy that muſt ever exiſt between the heads and the inferior members of a community.

From this imperfect, but juſt ſketch of the relative ſituations of the two leading diviſions of an Univerſity, it is eaſy to ſee the extreme caution neceſſary on the part of the ariſtocracy (if this word will be taken, as it is meant, without any reference to the abſurd tenets of modern factions) to preſerve a character conſiſtent with their ſtation, and to be able to endure, without ſhrinking, the perpetual trial of a partial and an arbitrary court. They are placed in that exalted rank, where the luſtre that ſurrounds them, magnifies the ſlighteſt blemiſh, and where an omiſſion of duty, which in other circumſtances would be conſidered as trivial, and ſcarce attract the ſlander of a confined neighbourhood, is viſible to every eye always on the watch to detect them, and carries with

it a train of evils, that, like the tail of a comet, would diſappear if removed to a greater diſtance from the blaze of glory.

Such is the arduous taſk of that Senate to whom I addreſs myſelf, and in a more eſpecial degree of thoſe, who by accepting public offices in the Univerſity, or in their own particular Colleges, are more highly reſponſible for all miſconduct. The queſtion next occurs, whether this duty be rigidly performed? That it is in general, charity requires us to grant, and truth does not refuſe acquieſcence; that it is univerſally, would be a burleſque upon adulation to aſſert. Deducting the natural conſequences of human infirmity, of occaſional relaxation, and of the frivolous inattentive character of the preſent age, there ſtill remain ſufficient inſtances of voluntary dereliction of duty, of habitual indulgence in idle and even criminal diſſipation, of alienation from thoſe principles, of which their ſtation peculiarly exacts the encouragement, to awaken the vigi-

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lance of the community, and make the active part of the commonwealth combine together to expel theſe drones and hornets from their ſociety.

I allude to no particular individuals, when I call the Univerſity to bear witneſs with me againſt the ſhameful negligence of ſome of its rulers, and when I, not without a bluſh, diſcloſe to the veterans who once frequented

> Cam's ſmooth margin, and the peaceful vale,
> Where Science call'd them to her ſtudious quire,
> And met them muſing in her cloiſters pale;

the degeneracy of their ſucceſſors. For though I abhor the ſpirit of diſcontent that rejoices in diſcovering the growing wickedneſs of the world, and though I do not hold the creed of thoſe who think virtue, like earthly ſubſtances, is ſubject to the ravages of time, and is impaired at every generation; ſtill to thoſe who have had opportunities of acquainting themſelves with the ſtate of learning and diſcipline here, ſome time back, I have no

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doubt but it muſt appear that the former is now more trifling, and the latter more lax than it uſed to be.

It is undeniable, that then the Maſter, the Tutors, and the generality of the Fellows of each ſociety, never omitted attending the College prayers either in the morning or evening, where the ſervice was performed in a manner that might tend to fix the naturally wandering attention of the younger part of the congregation; it is undeniable that then they ſeldom dined out of the public hall, and that whenever they joined the company of the ſtudents, it was with thoſe on whoſe regularity of behaviour it might ſeem to confer approbation. Need I draw the contraſt of this picture, which modern politeneſs has effected? When are the Fellows, or even the Tutors, now ſeen at the morning ſervice in chapel? An attendance to which they are urged, not more by the duties of their ſtation in College, than by the voice of religion, and often by the ſanctity of their profeſſion as clergymen.

clergymen. But thoſe who dare publicly to ſlight their God, and ſuffer their indolence to overcome their obedience to the ceremonies of the Church, of which they have ſolemnly entered themſelves as protectors, are not likely to be perſuaded to it by any conſiderations of propriety, or good example.—Yet, can it be expected that young men ſhould of their own accord, turn their minds to the ſacred duties of religion, which they ſee ſo conſtantly and openly violated by their ſeniors, who, by their ſuperior age and ſtation, ſhould be the firſt to join in them, and encourage others to the practice of them? Can it be expected that they ſhould look upon their attendance in chapel in any other light than as an expedient mode of muſtering them together; and that they meet there, not to offer up their prayers and thankſgivings to heaven, and to inculcate early in their minds the principles of piety; but merely to be reviewed, and to be pronounced regular or irregular, and accordingly puniſhed or approved of by thoſe, who by their own non-attendance declare this criterion of

regularity, to be merely an imaginary and arbitrary one? That this is the ſad effect is obvious to any one: the ſtudents themſelves allow that ſuch is their opinion of the obſolete cuſtom of attending prayers, and ſome of the graver part of the Univerſity excuſe themſelves by ſaying, that this, which they do not bluſh to call the chief end of the cuſtom, being anſwered, their conſciences are, therefore, acquitted of any further obligation.

Nor is this all. The ſervice is frequently performed in that ſlovenly manner, which reflects equal diſgrace upon the miniſter, and upon thoſe, who, by their abſence, may be ſaid to connive at it. This daily indecency naturally hardens the minds of the audience, and a young man generally leaves College diſguſted with all the holy rites of his Church, which he conſiders as the cloke of hypocriſy, and the juſtly-exploded remnant of ancient ſuperſtition. All reverence for the profeſſion, the ſervice, and poſſibly the doctrines of religion, is nearly obliterated, if

if not entirely effaced from his mind; and the firſt ſtab not only to his orthodoxy, but to his principles of piety and morality, is given him from the hand which is ſuppoſed to be ſtretched out to defend him.

None of the preſent members of the Univerſity can deny this ſtatement of the caſe to be true, and none of thoſe who remember what the diſcipline was half a century ago, will ſcruple to pronounce it degenerated. It is, indeed, a diſgraceful and a melancholy truth, that in a ſociety purpoſely calculated for the education of youth, where moſt of the older members are in holy orders, and a great part of the juniors are intended for them, that in ſuch a ſociety there ſhould be a greater neglect of the preſcribed forms of the Church, and leſs reverence for its ſacred rites, than in moſt other ſocieties in the kingdom; and yet this, I fear, is but too nearly the caſe.

The chief uſe of the inſtitution of public meals in the College halls, appears to be the prevention of expenſive and intemperate entainments, and, as ſuch, muſt be commended by every lover of decency, while all deviations from it ſhould be checked as much as poſſible. That ſomething has been lately done to enforce a ſtricter attendance on theſe meetings, I with pleaſure confeſs, but I know not whether more might not be done. I believe that there are but very few Colleges where non-attendance is puniſhed, ſo that the regularity of the ſtudents in this point is voluntary, and more dependance muſt be laid on their own prudence, than on the vigilance of their ſuperiors.

However trifling this objection may appear to ſome, who talk much about the neceſſity of mixing politeneſs with learning, I ſcruple not to declare it as my opinion, that this cuſtom is one of the chief cauſes of a very ſerious and growing evil to the nation, the enormous expence attending

attending a liberal education, by which many of the middling ranks of people, particularly clergymen of ſmall preferment, are either deterred from bringing their ſons up to learned profeſſions, or are nearly ruined in their exertions to effect it.

If it ſhould be ſaid that all expence of this ſort is voluntary, and therefore, no neceſſary incumbrance on the ſupport of a young man at College, I anſwer that it is by no means voluntary; that beſide the temptations it holds out to youths of weak minds, or ſocial diſpoſitions, it is a ſource of unavoidable expence to thoſe who wiſh to live as all around them do, and that whatever is the ſtandard price (as it may be called) of ſociety, muſt, in great meaſure, be paid. Nor would the advantages of a College education be much felt by him, who had paſſed his regular time here, and attended his due *quota* of lectures and ſchool exerciſes, without joining in the company of his fellow-ſtudents, who are ſo nearly and naturally connected with him. It is not the authors that are read here,

here, and which are acceſſible any where, nor the declamations, the diſputations, the examinations neceſſary to be gone through, that form the ſuperior excellence of an education in the Univerſity; but the knowledge of the world, and the enlarged ideas gained by the initiation into ſo extenſive a ſociety, the emulation inſeparable from the number of ſtudents, and the mutual information reſulting from the daily converſation of perſons eager after the ſame purſuits, and inflamed with the ſame love of learning. And all theſe are not adminiſtered gratis; to receive the benefits of ſociety, you muſt be on a par with them; to be well received, you muſt conform to their cuſtoms, and if you ſhare the profits, you muſt contribute your portion. Wiſely ſaid the old philoſopher, that nothing can be got for nothing, and dearly indeed, is this valuable privilege ſold.

Of all you, then, in whoſe hands the reins of government in this little kingdom are placed, I earneſtly requeſt an attention to theſe increaſing evils: I requeſt it, as a benefit

benefit to your country; I adviſe it, as an aggrandiſement of your well-earned honours; I demand it, as a duty to which you have ſolemnly pledged yourſelves. Perhaps you would wiſh to anſwer in terms that lately met ſuch deſerved approbation in a higher Senate, and ſay, that to complain of grievances without ſtating a remedy, is both impolitic and unfair. You cannot anſwer ſo; you cannot deny the exiſtence of the grievances, nor can you deny that the remedy is, in great meaſure, in your hands. Part of the corruptions pointed out are in yourſelves; I mean the corrupt part of yourſelves; all of them are eaſily to be corrected by you, as far as the correction of good example will go, and how far that is, you cannot be ignorant. It is you that form the baſis of a noble pyramid now ſadly out of repair, and mouldering even to its foundations. Where then is the neceſſary work of reformation to begin? Would you buſy yourſelves in beautifying the pinnacle of this edifice, till its baſe decays, or would you not exert your utmoſt endeavours to ſave and ſtrengthen

the foundation, that you may have your footing ſure, while you advance to the upper parts?

I am aware that I ſhall here offend many of my readers, and raiſe the clamour of the indolent, and the diſſolute, againſt me. I ſhall be branded as a libeller upon a moſt reſpectable branch of the community, and cenſured as inflaming the minds of the younger part of the Univerſity with tales of imagined depravity. But I deny the accuſation; I would not, were it in my power, diſcloſe the ſecret vices of any man, or ſtrive to leſſen even the unmerited reputation of any, by ſhewing the inconſiſtency of his profeſſions, and his actions. I will mention no circumſtance of lax diſcipline, but what are univerſally known; and ſo far from being concealed by the parties themſelves concerned, are often juſtified by them.—Is it not then a notorious fact that the Fellows and Tutors, of almoſt every College, join frequently, without ſcruple, that part of their pupils, who by their rank and fortune are moſt

liable

liable to extravagance, in their parties of pleaſure, in the moſt objectionable ſources of their expences; and may I be miſtaken, when I add, occaſionally in their exceſſes.

That I may not be accuſed of concealing falſehood under general invective, I will inſtance a few of the moſt glaring abuſes in relaxation of diſcipline. Large entertainments of whatever kind given in College, though not, perhaps, abſolutely forbidden by the letter of the ſtatutes, are ſurely contrary to the ſpirit of them, and, perhaps, only unnoticed there, becauſe the compoſers of the ſtatutes, like the legiſlator who decreed no puniſhment for parricide, did not conceive ſuch abuſes as likely ever to exiſt.

This is rendered probable by the very great caution with which all reſorting to taverns is forbidden, and the ſeverity with which it is puniſhable (I cannot ſay puniſhed) by the ſtatutes. For to guard againſt all exceſſes in taverns, and to per-

mit them at home, is razing the lion's beard, and letting his teeth and claws grow.

The opinion, however, of the generality of the Fellows of Colleges, is contrary to mine in this reſpect, if we may judge by the freedom with which they permit theſe meetings, and join in them; and I fear many of that reſpectable body will bluſh, when they read this, at the recollection that ſuch meetings have not always been confined within proper bounds. The grand feſtivals of each particular College ſeem to be conſidered as licenſed days, on which the reſtraint of the reſt of the year is ſhaken off; ſeverity gives way to mirth, and nature breaks from the ſhackles of diſcipline,

Narratur et priſci Catonis
Sæpe mero incaluiſſe virtus.

I would have been ſilent on this ſubject, if I had thought that what I have ſaid would diſcloſe a ſecret to a ſingle individual

vidual in the Univerſity, or if I had not known that the fact is ſo general, as to exculpate me from all ſuſpicion of perſonality.

A ſecond flagrant violation of the ſtatutes is the pernicious cuſtom of card-playing; a cuſtom vicious in its tendency, frequently expenſive, always trifling; the pretext and the refuge of idleneſs, the bane of all uſeful converſation, and conſequently of all laudable ſociety. The voice of the ſtatute on this ſubject is too clear and loud not to be heard, though experience ſhews it may be diſregarded. "Aleæ nullo tempore; chartæ pictæ non "niſi Chriſti nativitatis tempore, id eſt, "duodecim diebus tantùm poſt diem nati-"vitatis, idque moderate et idoneo tem-"pore, in aulis tantùm uſurpentur, ſub "pœnâ expulſionis poſt ſecundam admo-"nitionem." Here is no mention of thoſe *in ſtatu pupillari*; no licence to be given by maſters or tutors; no diſcretionary powers veſted in the ſeniority; it is as clear

clear and as expreſs as "Thou ſhall do no "murder."

And is it thus obſerved? Are cards never ſeen but twelve days after Chriſtmas, and then only in the College Halls? I leave the conſciences of the offenders to make the anſwer. The unaccountable clauſe that makes the celebration of our Savour's nativity the Saturnalia of the College is moſt religiouſly followed, while the general law from which this is but an exception is conſidered as calculated only for the rude times in which it was formed, and not obligatory on the gentlemen that have ſucceeded.

Nor is even the licence of this carnival confined within the bounds preſcribed. The public hall is changed to the combination-room, or private chambers, as if they were aſhamed of the manner in which they ſtretch their privilege; and the *idoneum tempus* is occaſionally made to extend to a very late hour. This

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is not a ſubject to be treated with ridicule, nor is the cuſtom, excluſive of the ſtatute by which it is forbidden, of harmleſs tendency, as ſome would ſtrive to make themſelves believe. It choaks converſation; it encourages idleneſs: it encourages gaming. I defy the moſt zealous ſticklers for it, to deny the fact, and the moſt acute caſuiſt to juſtify the indulgence of ſuch a cuſtom in open violation of the ſtatutes. If this be the improvement which modern politeneſs has added to education, give me the unlicked virtue of my forefathers.

Whatever ſneers ſome may be inclined to caſt on the objection made to trifling converſation, I am not aſhamed to repeat, that I think it a very great and a diſgraceful nuiſance. To ſuppoſe that in the uſual companies which meet in College, there are none capable of keeping up a rational chain of converſation, would be an inſult upon the underſtanding of the Univerſity. Whence comes it, then, that the ſenſible part ſuffer themſelves to be overwhelmed by the boiſterous folly of thoſe, to whom

ignorance

ignorance ſeems to give, rather than take away, confidence? Whence comes it that inſtead of uniting their ſtrength together to ſilence ſuch idle talkers, and to make converſation the channel of uſeful information, and harmleſs mirth, they join in the torrent that is only furious for want of reſiſtance, before which, even in the ſlighteſt degree, it would ſhrink, conſcious of its own inferiority? It is becauſe this reſiſtance is not often enough exerted from the quarter whence it firſt ought to begin, the older part of the community. Let them hoiſt the ſtandard of rational converſation, and avow their rebellion againſt the impotent tyranny of ſelf-ſufficient ignorance, and the cauſe will not want adherents in any company.

I have more than once hinted at the falſe idea of politeneſs in education, under which title this relaxation of diſcipline has been often defended; and I would ſay no more upon the ſubject, were I not apprehenſive of being miſunderſtood. I do not wiſh, then, to educate young men merely

merely for the cloſet, to render them learned clowns; I am far from deſiring to reject the accompliſhments which form the man of the world, and the gentleman, to make room for thoſe which compoſe the ſcholar; but I deny that an Univerſity is either from its origin deſigned, or from its internal and immutable conſtitution, calculated for the formation of the former character; and the ideas ſhould be kept diſtinct. It is in vain that you attempt from the depths of ſcholaſtic learning, and the labyrinths of metaphyſical or mathematical pedantry, to extract the poliſhed gentleman. You may make him give up one character and cling to the other; but like a chemical menſtruum already ſaturated with one ſubſtance, he is unable to retain another, and the one that has the leaſt attraction will be thrown an uſeleſs maſs to the bottom. Daily experience ſhews that it is eaſy to transform a promiſing ſcholar into a coxcomb, an aſſuming ſelf-conceited being, who imagines he has acquired in the Univerſity, all thoſe nameleſs graces, which no ſtudy either of Euclid or of

Chesterfield ever gave, but which flow alone from a frequent intercourse with good company. You may patch up "a fool, a motley fool," whose politeness, like a forced shrub, preserves the form without the flavour of the plant of natural growth, who conceives elegance attainable by rule, and substitutes assurance in the room of wit, and a dancing master's lessons in the room of ease; but a College is not the soil fit for the production of true politeness: confine, then, the business of the University to the furnishing of the mind, and leave the person to be finished at home.

There is another common observation adduced in defence of many deviations from the statutes, urging that the regulations of that code were made at a time when learning, manners, and men themselves were so different from what they now are, that it is not to be wondered at, if many articles there laid down are useless, inconsistent, and even incompatible with modern times. It is said that many are calculated

calculated for the removal of evils, which either no longer exiſt, or which the generality of mankind have agreed not to conſider as evils; and that many others are only inſtruments of uſeleſs ſeverity, tending to alienate the affections, without bettering the morals of the ſtudents. Granting this to be partly true, for the truth is extended wider than it ought, ſurely the ſelection of ſtatutes to be deemed obſolete has not been wiſely made. Thoſe mentioned in the foregoing pages were, for the moſt part, made within this century, and calculated for the prevention of evils, which, in ſome degree, always muſt exiſt, and which none can deny to be of the moſt dangerous tendency. Theſe, then, are the laws, which, as it were, by common conſent the Senate of Cambridge have agreed to vote out of date and unneceſſary; while among thoſe they keep are orders reſpecting ceremonies, which, as they are now become mere ſhadows of forms, ſerve only to render the mode of education ridiculous.

Among ſuch may be reckoned the ingenious regulations of 1750, reſpecting the dreſs of the ſtudents. Who was the propoſer, or who compoſed the majority that voted them, I do not know; but I am happy to think how extremely ignorant the Senate at that time was of the abſtruſe ſcience of dreſs. To ſuppoſe that they could fetter the Proteus of faſhion by laying an interdict on laces, cuffs, and capes, is an inſtance of primæval ſimplicity, that we ſhould ſmile at in a Carthuſian, or a Gentoo. They were not aware that foppery, like a pick-pocket, changes its name and appearance ſo often, that by the time they have made out the warrant to apprehend it under one deſcription, their vigilance is eluded by its having aſſumed a different title and form. The preſent age ſufficiently ſhews, that a coxcomb may flutter in a black coat as well as a red one; and the extravagancies which the Univerſity employed its whole power to ſubdue, have long ſince been driven into oblivion by the far more powerful hand of faſhion and whim.

Beſides

Beſides the impracticability of the attempt, it is unworthy and abſurd of a grave Senate of an Univerſity, to deſcend to deſcriptions of particular modes of dreſs, to forbid one ſleeve, and recommend another. Leave ſuch trifles to the animadverſion of particlar tutors or friends, or leave them, if you will, to the ſenſe or the caprice of the wearer; a ſober behaviour is of far more conſequence than a grave-coloured ſuit, and a red waiſtcoat a very ſmall crime in compariſon of gaming, drinking, or irreligion. I muſt, however, own that the execution of this ſtatute has been ſufficiently relax of late, and that the modern ſeniors are adepts enough in dreſs to ſee the abſurdity of it. There are, however, inſtances, even lately, when this trifling ordinance has been dragged out, like a ruſty ſword, rather to make the bearer of it ridiculous, than to inſpire any terror in the offenders, who cannot but laugh to ſee ſo unweildy a weapon, as an Univerſity ſtatute, employed to put to flight the light caprice of a moment.

This, however, is only one inſtance out of many, of the zealous adherence to obſolete laws. Whoever has been preſent at the contemptible equivocations upon the ſtatute reſpecting exerciſes, which go under the name of huddlings, with the declamations, and many other unmeaning ceremonies uſed at the taking of degrees, will agree with me, that if it was reſolved that ſome of the ſtatutes ſhould be broken on the plea of uſeleſſneſs, a better choice might be made than of thoſe relative to the morals of the Univerſity. The inſtitutions concerning theſe exerciſes, either are proper and uſeful, or not. If they are proper, why are they not obſerved according to the ſpirit of the ſtatute? If improper, why is the empty ſhadow of them kept up, which can only remind us of their impropriety, and add a tinge of ridicule to it, by thus preſerving the ſhell of them alone? Upon the horns of this dilemmna, I ſhall leave the conſiderate part of the Senate; and as for the remainder, who ſuffer things to go on merely becauſe they have gone on for ſome time paſt, I

ſhall

ſhall beg leave to remind them, that this indifference and neglect is, in their ſituation, a poſitive crime, becauſe a poſitive duty is violated by it.

Having now delivered my thoughts, with impartiality I am certain, I hope with conviction, upon the diſcipline of this Univerſity with regard to its morals, I might here conclude; and as much has been ſaid, and ſomething written of late years, concerning the preſent ſyſtem of ſtudies, my own animadverſions upon them would not properly come under my preſent plan, which is not to give my opinion on diſputed points, ſo much as to bring into notice other ſubjects, which have hitherto remained unheeded, and which require but to be pointed out, in order to become the objects of conſideration, poſſibly of reformation. The learning, however, of an Univerſity, is ſo important a branch, though by no means the principal one, of its conſtitution, and the field it opens to deliberation is ſo extenſive,

that

that I cannot close these remarks without a few hints respecting it.

The rules necessary to guide a legislator of an University in settling the plan of its studies, may all be traced up into two, the fixing upon proper branches of science, and the establishing such exercises, and other regulations, as may best conduce to the acquisition of these branches.—With regard to our selection of studies, the most usual objection made to it is, that it is almost entirely confined to the mathematics, under which name is also included, the theory of natural philosophy. That this is the fact must be confessed; for though many munificent benefactors have instituted prizes for excellence in classical literature, in which they have been greatly assisted by the lectures of each College; and though most of the Colleges also pay attention to morality, metaphysics, the elementary parts of logic, and a few to divinity, still the public honours of the University conferred on taking the first

degree

degree in arts, are diſtributed merely according to mathematical merit, unleſs one evening dedicated to an examination in morality, to which no attention is paid in ranking the candidates, may be called an exception. It is alſo an undeniable fact, that this branch of learning is the only one indiſpenſably neceſſary to the taking of a degree, as alſo to ſome other honours. The truth, then, of what theſe objectors aſſert, is paſt doubt, and the diſpute is transferred to the propriety of the fact, whether this ſtudy, ſo peculiarly choſen, is worthy of the preference it has obtained? It is ſaid, that the great attention paid to this one ſpecies of knowledge, precludes alike all leiſure and all incitement to purſue any other; that the time of the ſtudents is totally occupied by it, and their whole ambition directed to this one focus; hence, when after three years of continued diligence and painful aſſiduity, they receive the deſired reward of their labour, they leave College elate with their fancied ſuperiority, conceiving that they, who have excelled the generality of their fellow-ſtudents in

this ſeat of learning, muſt be qualified for any ſtation where learning is the chief requiſite; but are cruelly diſappointed to find, that they have been purſuing a ſhadow, that their ſplendid acquiſitions are uſeleſs, and their labour to begin again:

Perierunt tempora longi
Servitii.———

This key, which they naturally imagined would open to them the way to any ſtation, or any profeſſion, which their choice ſhould fix on, is found upon trial to gain them admiſſion nowhere; they are refuſed holy orders; they muſt ſtudy for the bar, they muſt attend the Hoſpitals. Even their boaſted honours are unknown out of the ſphere in which they moved. Like an European caſt among ſavages, their titles convey no ideas of reſpect, their paſſports are unintelligible, and their claims to ſuperiority ridiculed.

The complaint to many appears juſt, and as the greater part of the ſtudents are deſigned for the Church, the juſtice of it ſeems

ſeems confirmed by the accounts occaſionally heard, of the moſt diſtinguiſhed competitors for academical glory having been refuſed admittance into orders, or the happy conquerors, in the arduous conteſt, confined to a miſerable curacy ſcarcely ſufficient to ſupport them. Hence is inferred the propriety of introducing divinity into the neceſſary ſtudies and examinations.

Let us examine more narrowly this complaint, and the inference. The Univerſity was intended for the reception of ſtudents of all kinds; it is not a nurſery for clergymen, for lawyers, or for phyſicians; it is an extenſive ſchool for all ranks, for all profeſſions, calculated to give to each that ſort of learning which is alike neceſſary for all. Under this notion of it, with what propriety can ſtudies be enforced which are uſeleſs except to one profeſſion? To make ſuch ſtudies general is to ſacrifice the time and labour of one half of the Univerſity to the convenience of the other. This I aſſert as a general

principle; the application of it to the caſe of divinity requires ſome explanation, leſt I ſhould be thought to look upon religious knowledge as neceſſary for the clergy alone. But there is a diſtinction to be made: practical religion ſhould doubtleſs be the firſt object of every man's life, and conſequently of his knowledge; in compariſon to it, all other acquiſitions vaniſh into trifles, and without it, the moſt exalted genius and the moſt improved talents are, to uſe the words of a great divine, "but "an irreſiſtible evil, and an omnipotent "miſchief." All learning then that may ſerve to promote this grand cauſe, is not only admiſſible, but indiſpenſable; not merely a conſiderable branch, but the root and ſap of all knowledge. How far, however, this learning extends may admit of much doubt; and that it is more promoted by the peruſal of the Scriptures and the expoſitions of the practical parts of them, by perſuaſion to good behaviour united with good example, and by a regular obſervance of the external duties of religion, than by being examined in the works of the

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moſt acute ſpeculative theologians, is to me paſt diſpute. Let young men be taught the importance and the comforts of a religious life, and they will not be inclined to neglect any neceſſary inſtruction reſpecting it; but as long as theological learning is more attended to than a virtuous behaviour, little can the Univerſity have to boaſt of in its improvement in religion. The queſtion is, Do theſe introducers of divinity wiſh to make the ſtudents good men, or ſkilful polemics? If the latter, I deny that it is neceſſary to above one fourth of the number, whoſe intereſts, therefore, are not to prevail over thoſe of the other three parts; if the former, I heartily unite with them, and hope for their aſſiſtance in forwarding the reformation of diſcipline I have been urging, a reformation of far more efficacy to bring their intentions to execution, than the introduction of ſpeculative divinity.—Beſides, there is always a danger that divinity inculcated in College lectures and public examinations, will be looked upon merely as the means of attaining preſent honour. This

remark

remark may, however, be regarded as too nice; I will, therefore, grant the propriety of paying ſome public attention to ſuch points of knowledge as the religious duties of every one require; ſtill this conceſſion cannot extend to thoſe ſtudies which are more peculiarly adapted for the miniſters of the Church, and there is no more reaſon for making ſuch ſubjects a part of the general plan of education, than for examining the whole Univerſity in the works of Blackſtone or Sydenham. The complaints of the ignorance of thoſe who, immediately after their Batchelor of Arts' degree, become candidates for holy orders, are owing ſolely to the ſtrange, I might ſay, impious idea, that leſs preparation is neceſſary for admittance into the ſacred profeſſion than into any other. How unjuſt would be thought the complaints of thoſe, who were diſappointed in their expectations of having been called to the bar, or being ſettled as a practiſing phyſician, within a year after their departure from the Univerſity. Whence comes it, then, that the bodies and the properties of the

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nation are not ſuffered to be truſted, but to thoſe who have ſpent ſeveral years in attaining the qualifications of their profeſſions, while the more important concerns of our ſouls are put, without ſcruple, into the hands of young men freſh from the Univerſity, ſcarce emerged from its diſſipations and vices, never throughly inſtructed, often entirely ignornant of the momentous duties of the ſtation they have thus thruſt themſelves into? Is not this unaccountable inconſiſtency the cauſe of the contempt into which our clergy have of late fallen, for their ignorance and their immorality? Is it not the cauſe of the rapid increaſe of Diſſenters of every denomination, whoſe miniſters are men of tried abilities and known ſteadineſs? Is it not the cauſe of the unfounded complaints againſt the ſeverity of biſhops, who are, in general, far more deſerving of cenſure for their ill-timed compaſſion, than for their caution? Shew the ſuperior reverence due to our religious concerns and to the ſacred calling, by requiring, at leaſt, an equal period of preparation for it as for other

profeſſions,

profeſſions, and there will be no occaſion to alter the preſent ſyſtem, in order to favour the indolence and impatience of thoſe, who ſhould be the moſt active, and the moſt perſevering in their induſtry, while you impoſe unneceſſary articles of learning upon thoſe who are already ſufficiently retarded in their progreſs to profeſſional eminence.

I cannot then agree with the advocates for the introduction of more theological learning, as the greater part of what they propoſe is calculated evidently, and indeed profeſſedly, for the accomodation of thoſe who are intended for the Church alone, and conſequently they would pervert the original intention of the inſtitution to the partial convenience of a particular body of men. All the ſubjects of ſtudy (I mean ſuch as are neceſſary to be attended to by all who wiſh to diſtinguiſh themſelves) ſhould be ſubjects of common utility, ſuch as tend to open the mind, enlarge the ideas, and lay a firm foundation of general knowledge ready for the reception of any ſuperſtructure.

ſuperſtructure. And, doubtleſs, for this purpoſe natural philoſophy was admirably choſen, as it opens the wideſt field for the exertion of the faculties; it teaches at once the ſtrength and the weakneſs of human reaſon, as it ſhews to what lengths the enlightened genius of Newton could puſh his reſearches, and yet how many of the moſt obvious phænomena are beyond the utmoſt ſtretch of our curioſity or conception: it frees the mind from prejudice and haſty opinions*, and diſcovers to it its own powers. Or ſhould theſe advantages be reckoned imaginary or trivial, it boaſts of far nobler perfection, in being able to raiſe the ſoul to the contemplation of the wonders of the creation, while it diſplays the immenſe ſcheme of the viſible world, as harmonious as it is vaſt, and yet teaches that this ſcheme is but a point in compariſon of the boundleſs univerſe.

* Thoſe who have ſeen it proved, that two lines may continually approach yet never meet, and have learned to meaſure the diſtances of the ſun and planets, will not haſtily pronounce any thing impoſſible.

Yet while ſuch are the ſuperior uſes of this ſcience, it may fairly be doubted, whether the doctrine of abſtract mathematics, which is commonly united with it, and, indeed, in ſome degree neceſſary for its demonſtrations, can be included under the ſame eulogium? Its uſes in common life are manifeſtly none, becauſe inapplicable to any exiſting thing, and it is more likely to confuſe the ideas than to extend them. I ſpeak this of the higher parts of the ſtudy, which are, however, now the criterion of philoſophical excellence, and without which a knowledge of natural philoſophy is unable to procure the firſt honours. As this is almoſt univerſally complained of, it may perhaps, be allowed me to conſider the thing as condemned, and that a remedy only is wanting. How it has been introduced, is eaſy to ſee: ſixty years ago, the examination for the Batchelor's degree was confined to the works of Locke, Clarke, and other writers of the ſame turn, with the moſt important parts of the four branches of natural philoſophy;

phy; the diſcoveries of Newton, the abſtract mathematics, even the elements of Euclid, and Algebra, were only known by thoſe who choſe to attend the lectures of Profeſſor Saunderſon; for the College lectures were ſilent upon them. The works, however, of Dr. Smith, and Dr. Rutherforth, naturally introduced a greater attention to the ſubjects of which they treated in the two great Colleges, which from thence gradually ſpread to the others, and ſoon after became a part of the public examinations, and in time a principal part. Hence, as each ſucceeding year brought additional improvement in the ſcience, it is natural to ſuppoſe, that theſe abſtruſe labyrinths of it were worked out to decide between the ſkill of thoſe candidates who were alike maſters of the plainer parts. The remedy for the evil then, if it be allowed to be one, evidently offers itſelf, by recurring to the original ſimplicity of the mathematical examinations, and by ſupplying the deficiency in the ſubjects by introducing others of a different kind. No one ſcience is ſuffi-

cient to exerciſe the genius of above an hundred ſtudents, incited by emulation to ſurpaſs each other; nor is any one ſcience ſufficient to be ſhewn as the fruits of four years labour, at a time of life when a general knowledge is wanting. I have heard, that a very worthy member of the Univerſity, not long ſince, propoſed a plan for theſe examinations, which appeared to obviate all objections ariſing from their partiality, by leaving it to the choice of the ſtudent on how many, or on what ſubjects he would reſt his claim to a degree; but making it abſolutely neceſſary, that he ſhould paſs a tolerable examination in ſome one. This would at once take away the neceſſity of entering ſo deep into one particular ſcience, and would beſides cut off all pretences from the indolent, who now hide their idleneſs under the excuſe of diſlike for that one ſtudy, which is the principal one requiſite. Many are the branches of learning which might be included in this ſyſtem of examinations. Morality and metaphyſics, particularly the works of Locke, might be changed from

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an empty form to a real ſubject of trial. Claſſical literature is univerſally confeſſed to claim a very high place in the education either of a ſcholar or a gentleman, and, though doubtleſs omitted only becauſe the candidates for a degree were ſuppoſed to be ſufficient adepts in it, cannot now be paſſed by under the ſame pretence. The ſame may be obſerved of hiſtory, "which," ſays the learned and eloquent Barrow, "ſupplies the room of experience, and "furniſhes us with prudence at the ex-"pence of others." But it is not my intention to enumerate the various kinds of knowledge that ought to adorn the ſtudent from a learned Univerſity; I can only lament that there is ſo little chance for any of them being at preſent attended to, and that it muſt ſtill continue to happen, that a young man may return crowned with all the laurels Cambridge can ſupply, and yet bluſh for his ignorance in the moſt common company.

Of the methods of inſtruction in the Univerſity I have little to ſay, becauſe I know

know no material objections to be anſwered, and have none to propoſe. The tutor's lectures, in each particular College, are certainly preferable to the original mode of inſtruction by public profeſſors, who read lectures for the benefit of thoſe, and thoſe only, who choſe and could afford to attend them, while the buſineſs of the tutors was ſo confined as to be of little uſe to the ſcholar, and of leſs credit to themſelves. And the evil which this alteration has introduced, by turning many of the profeſſorſhips (wherever laxity of conſcience will permit it) into ſinecures, is overbalanced by the opportunity it gives to ſeveral induſtrious men of emerging from the ſtate of indolent uſeleſſneſs, to which College fellowſhips are unavoidably ſubject, and becoming uſeful to the public, an honour to their College, and happy in themſelves, by deliverance from indolence and inſignificance. It may, indeed, generally be obſerved that the tutors of each College form the moſt reſpectable part of the ſociety, which is an additional proof, if any ſuch were wanting of the efficacy

of

of employment on the mind and character, and of the neceſſity of rubbing off the corroding ruſt of inactivity; a ruſt with which the reſident Fellows of Univerſities are too frequently incruſted. A foreigner would ſcarce believe that fewer works of learning are publiſhed from our Univerſities, than from the ſame number of men of liberal education anywhere in the kingdom; and yet this is an undoubted fact. Since the act of Parliament in 1781, which gave 500*l.* annually to each of the Univerſities towards the promotion of learning, Oxford has produced but very few learned publications from its own body, and Cambridge, I believe, none. This demonſtrates, that the freedom from neceſſary employment, which the founders of the Univerſity doubtleſs thought would be productive of the moſt beneficial effects to learning, eſpecially when aſſiſted by a conſtant intercourſe with a learned body, and the liberty of admiſſion into an extenſive public library, is, in fact, the moſt ſtubborn enemy that ſcience has, and is, I am convinced, the ſole cauſe why the reſident

reſident members of the Univerſity are, taken in the maſs, ſlower in their progreſs to literary eminence, and leſs often arrive at it, than thoſe whoſe minds are rendered active by neceſſary buſineſs.

When I am in this part of my ſubject, I cannot forbear remarking a crying grievance in the exerciſes in the ſchools. What I wiſh to recommend to public notice upon this ſubject, is the barbarous language, (for Latin it cannot with truth be called) which is, as it were, peculiar to that ſpot; language which as it naturally tends to corrupt the taſte of thoſe, who by cuſtom are initiated into it, ſo it cannot but reflect high diſgrace on the Univerſity; and if you will but conſider what muſt be the reflections of a ſtranger, or a foreigner, who by a natural impulſe of curioſity ſhould be tempted to attend the public diſputations, you will bluſh at the character that the learning of Cambridge muſt have acquired. This infamous practice is the mere effect of corruption and indolence;

indolence; it was unknown at the beginning of this century, when the Latin of the ſchools was always correct, frequently elegant. Whence comes this change? From the diſuſe of the private diſputations in the College Halls, a diſuſe of the moſt ſingular kind, as it could not be underſtood to expreſs a diſapprobation of the cuſtom, while it was continued in the public ſchools, and it muſt have been foreſeen that it was certain to have the effect which it has, of rendering the ſtudents unfit for that more public exhibition. It is preſerving the end, and cutting off the only poſſible means; directing the traveller to a certain point, and ſtopping up the only road that leads to it; in a word, it is one of the moſt flagrant inſtances of ſacrificing propriety, and even conſiſtency, to indolence, that the hiſtory of this, perhaps of any Univerſity can afford.

I have now concluded theſe trifling remarks, and I end them, as I began, by declaring that my object is not ſatire, but reformation; and that if I have ſaid any

thing that appears harſh, it is not with a wiſh of rendering any one ridiculous or infamous, but merely to rouſe the lethargic attention of the rulers of this Univerſity, by ſhewing them the exiſting evils in their proper and ſtrongeſt colours; and I truſt I ſhall gain credit for this aſſertion with every candid reader.

I earneſtly, then, requeſt all you who are appointed to preſide over the morals, learning, and character of the riſing hopes of the nation, to reflect ſeriouſly on the hints here offered to you. Fooliſh and inſignificant as they may appear for want of a better advocate, they will, I am confident, by deliberation aſſume conſequence, and, to all unprejudiced minds, bring that conviction, which ever accompanies truth dreſſed in its meaneſt garb. It is, at leaſt, your duty to give them a fair hearing, nor can you fully ſatisfy your obligations to the public, if you do not impartially conſider every objection made againſt the preſent mode of conducting the education of thoſe entruſted to your care. Do not let your

conſciences

conſciences be lulled by the ſuggeſtions of indolence, that the Univerſity is under the ſame regulations as it long has been, and that as no flagrant ill effects of its corruption have yet appeared, there can be no need for reformation. Such reaſoning is falſe, both in the fact and in the inference. The Univerſity is not equally incorrupt as it has been, but the corruptions are daily ſpreading, and may ſhortly reach the vital parts; neither if the good and evil were diſtributed in the ſame proportion as ever, would it be juſt to conclude that there is no neceſſity for reform? Wherever there are evils that admit of a remedy, there is a neceſſity for reform, and it is idleneſs, not reaſon, that teaches the contrary. Much leſs diſregard this exhortation to amendment, upon the plea, that your ſtay here will be ſhort, and that it will be time enough, if your ſucceſſors undertake a taſk which, though you cannot deny to be requiſite, you feel to be difficult. Of all dangers that of delay is frequently the greateſt, and of all motives it is always the moſt unpardonable, becauſe it is equally

contrary

contrary to your intereſt and your duty. It is the moſt annoying enemy to that propenſity of indolence, for the indulgence of which you commit violence on your conſciences; it doubles the difficulty which you uſe as an excuſe for gratifying it. Recollect that every year's delay to ſo important a work as the reformation of abuſes in an Univerſity, is a prolongation of profligacy, immorality, and irreligion in the ſtudents, and of ridicule and diſgrace upon yourſelves; while you ſit inactive, you are daily ſanctioning diſſipation and impiety, and ſhewing your own callouſneſs to ſhame: you are wilfully neglecting the ſacred charge with which you are entruſted by the whole nation: you are deceiving one half of the world, and diſguſting the other. Rouſe, then, from an indolence not leſs criminal than diſgraceful, and ſhew that you are worthy of the exalted ſituation in which you are placed, by exhibiting at once the nobleſt examples both of wiſdom and virtue, by repentance and amendment of former errors. So may you be enrolled among the ſacred names

of

of thoſe, who have dared to reſiſt the encroachments of abuſe, and expelled the monſters of corruption, and may you receive the moſt honourable and the ſweeteſt of rewards, the gratitude of the preſent age, and the bleſſings of poſterity.

THE END.

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